



## PUERTO RICAN CONGRESS OF NEW JERSEY

Hector Machado  
Chairperson  
Enrique Arroyo  
Executive Director

April 28, 1980

Mr. Jerome White  
Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Community Affairs  
303 West State Street  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Mr. White:

The directors of Hispanic agencies in the state were called to a meeting last April 8th to be briefed on the reorganization of the Office of Hispanic Affairs within O&A.

Many of us were concerned about a number of issues that surfaced at that meeting.

For the record, we would like to list those concerns and outline our basic position with respect to them.

### 1. Staffing of OHA

While we understand that at present OHA staffing consists solely of Mr. Miguel Garcia, we would anticipate that at some future time this office will have additional staff. Our concern in this area is that, as in the past, staff of OHA be paid out of the administrative line of the Department and that money not be taken from the legislative appropriation which is earmarked for Hispanic services. It is our understanding that it is the intent of the legislature to designate these funds, as a line item in the budget, to support agencies serving the Hispanic community. To cut into this appropriation to pay OHA staff or other administrative overhead would affect the delivery of services which the legislature intends.

### 2. Priority for matching funds

We are in agreement that the first priority for OHA funds should be to provide matching funds to Hispanic agencies to secure other funds.

### 3. Straight or administrative grants

OHA staff present at the meeting expressed a desire to give a very low priority to non-matching grants, specifically for grants to administration. Here we differ. Our agencies tend to be small and underfunded. To the extent that OHA is able to provide administrative grants or program grants, as a second priority, this reduces the need to divert other service funds (such as Title II) to administration, suggesting direct service delivery. OHA

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should recognize these administrative needs in order to foster agencies that can function competently and secure other funds.

#### 4. Mergers of agencies

We feel that funding sources (in general) should not dictate to boards of directors of private, non-profit agencies in our community that they must merge with other similar organizations in order to be funded. This is an assault upon their self-determination.

It is seldom, if ever, the case that there are two Hispanic agencies in one same area providing the same services. In some cases this has occurred, but one needs to look at the historical reasons. While we can cite several instances, let us mention but one.

In a particular city when the advocacy role of an agency robbed the municipal powers the wrong way, a competing group was organized with the backing of that city's mayor and did, indeed, duplicate services being offered by the legitimate community-based organization. At one time DCA made a patently political decision (not based on any professional human services criteria) to take money from the existing organization to set up a competing one more favorable to City Hall. This happened in a past administration.

To ask legitimate agency A to merge with front-agency B would be a travesty on justice.

#### 5. Historical funding

We feel that patterns of historical funding, which imply a track record, should be respected. Agencies should be evaluated both fiscally and programmatically and funded on professional criteria. To disturb such funding for political or personal reasons, while an agency continued to deliver well, should not be considered seriously for one minute.

#### 6. Role of DCA

We feel that the DCA should be not only a source of funds to our community (as intended by the legislature and administration) but an advocate for our agencies as well.

There are diverse sources of funds within DCA itself (CDBG, Weatherization, Older Americans Act, etc.) to which DCA should facilitate access to the Hispanic community. This is most efficiently done by providing appropriate and timely information to Hispanic agencies about the normal procedures for applying and through advocacy on our behalf.

Likewise DCA could play a similar role in its interaction with government sources outside of DCA.

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We feel that these matters of policy are of urgent importance and would welcome an opportunity to discuss them directly with you, since you have been identified to us as the officer to whom GSA reports directly.

We would request that you meet either with all of the directors or with a regionally representative group of directors at your earliest convenience, preferably in late May.

The persons whose names appear below are signatories to this letter and have given their consent to its content.

We can set up the meeting if you will call me, in my capacity as Chairperson of the Hispanic Director's Association or Mr. Lorenzo Hernandez of the Hispanic Working Group (201)779-0260.

Sincerely yours,

*Enrique Arroyo*  
Enrique Arroyo  
Executive Director

EA/ed  
cc: Mike Garcia, GSA

The following directors have authorized that their names be included:

- 1) Mr. Eze Dominguez, GSA PRAC - Visaland
- 2) Mr. Maria Lynchok, Hispanic Affairs & Resource Center, Ashbury Park
- 3) Ms. Lydia Gonzalez, Hispanic Association Ocean Co.
- 4) Mr. Lorenzo Hernandez, Hispanic Information Center, Pascatic
- 5) Mr. Raulo Rivera, La Casa de San Pedro, Newark
- 6) Mr. William de Jesus, Latin Organization of Atlantic City
- 7) Mr. Corpus Mendez-Jimenez, P.R.A.E. - New Brunswick
- 8) Ms. Soopa M. Colon, P.R.A.E. - Fenwick Grove
- 9) Mr. Julio Barrios, P.R.A.E. - Camden
- 10) Mr. Juan E. Lopez, S.A.S.C.A. - Mt. Holly
- 11) Mr. Luis Navarro, Spanish Fraternity of Portsmouth Co.
- 12) Mr. David Fann, Lakewood Day Care Center
- 13) Mr. Jose Flores, P.R. Community Day Care - Trenton